

## PERSONAL SKILLS 1 ACTIVITIES

Course Code: 2857

### A. INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS (Teen Success Strategies)

#### 1. Describe ways to build a winning attitude.

- **WHAT AN ATTITUDE! -**

- Variation 1: Have students offer explanations for the statement, "Oh, he (or she) has an attitude!" Generate a list of typical teen attitudes.
- Variation 2: Ask students to name a mode of transportation (kind, type, or brand) that best describes their attitude towards life in general day in and day out. What type of transportation was selected? Why?
- Variation 3: What was your attitude when you first began to ride a bike, skate, or hit a ball? How did you feel after you mastered these tasks?

Formulate a definition for the term attitude. Ask students to explain how attitudes affect success and failure in our lives.

- What is an attitude?
- How do we develop attitudes?
- What is the relationship between attitude and behavior?
- How do attitudes influence a person's potential?

- **WINNING RESPONSES** – Consider winning responses to the following statements. The responses should be positive and upbeat. Allow student to role play the statements and responses. Do words have power? How do students feel after responding in a positive way?

- "Will you please take over your sister's house chores while her leg is in a cast?"
- "If you can't come up with the money, you won't be able to go on the trip."
- "All students will have to write a term paper, due on Friday, a minimum of fifteen pages long, on the topic of 'Teen Crime in America,' or 'Television: Friend or Foe?'"
- "What are you going to do about your failing grade?"
- "Clean up your room or you'll find it padlocked!"
- "Why do you play your music so loud? How can you possibly enjoy it?"

- **FEAR OF FAILURE** - What is the greatest deterrent to "joining the race"—getting involved or allowing oneself to succeed? Fear of failure is a powerful force. Read the following prose found in the Wall street Journal, "Don't Be Afraid to Fail."

- You've failed many times although you may not remember.
- You fell down the first time you tried to walk.
- You almost drowned the first time your tried to swim, didn't you?
- Did you hit the ball the first time you swung a bat?
- Heavy hitters, the ones who hit the most home runs, also strike out a lot.
- R. H. Macy failed seven times before his store in New York caught on.
- English novelist, John Creasey, got 753 rejection slips before he published 564 books.
- Babe Ruth struck out 1,330 times, but he also hit 714 home runs.
- Don't worry about failure.
- Worry about the chances you miss when you don't even try.

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### 2. Identify techniques for developing a positive self-image.

- **DREAM IMAGE** – Create a dream image for oneself. Have students find and carefully cut out magazine pictures of what they think are the perfect lips, eyes, nose, hair, ears, cheekbones and other facial features in close proportions to each other. These should come from different images not all found in one picture. Pass out balloons. Blow up and knot the balloons, turn them upside down, tie fishline on the knot (a length to hang the balloons from the ceiling?), and paste the face parts on the balloons with glue. Take time to look at the creations. The results will be very funny. Display the balloons by hanging them from the ceiling. Discuss the point of this activity. Students will realize that there are many different ideas of a dream image. Discuss the following questions:
  - Is there such a thing as a perfect face? What may be perfect for one person may not be perfect for another.
  - What makes people beautiful? Do you love someone because they are beautiful or are they beautiful because you love them?
  - Do teens think they must have the perfect image or be the perfect person? Can it be achieved? Can this thinking be a source of stress for teens?
  - Why is self-esteem at risk in the teen years? (The teen years are filled with instability and upheavals. The tremendous physical and chemical changes, emotional upsets, social pressures, and parental/peer expectations impact on teens forcing self-evaluation. Teens are faced with making decisions that have lifetime implications. They must deal with and solve enormous problems, often alone.)
- **DANGEROUS CRITICISM** – Ask students to write the names of people they often criticize. Ask students to raise their hands when the number of names they have written down is stated. Then ask students the following questions and allow time for reflective discussion:
  - Generally, how frequently do you criticize others? Once a day? Twice a day? Frequently during the day? Never?
  - What is accomplished by criticizing others?
  - How do you feel when you criticize others/ Better or worse? Energized or depleted of energy?
  - Does criticizing oneself or others build good self-esteem?
  - Is this a habit in which you can “beat up” on yourself for what you see as weaknesses?
  - Why do you think teens spend a lot of time and energy engaged in this activity?Stress that an individual cannot criticize oneself or others and build self-esteem.

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### B. CONSUMER SERVICES (Management Magic)

#### 1. Explore teen jobs to generate income.

- **MAKE MONEY WORK** – In small groups, have students generate a list of teen income sources and expenses. Each student should then determine one personal financial goal. Suggest ways to stretch one's income or reduce expenses to meet the goals.
- **BUSINESS IS BUSINESS!** – Divide students into eight groups. Provide each group with a large piece of butcher paper or poster board. Have students brainstorm age appropriate jobs for young teens in the following categories: Indoor, Outdoor, Pets, Repair, Entertainment, Elderly and Adult Services, Child Care, and Food and Clothing. Hang lists on the wall. For entrepreneurial teenagers, name two or three jobs in each category and discuss how to get the business started. Award a prize to the group with the longest list of job ideas.
- **TAKE A STAND** – Read the following statements and ask students to agree or disagree. Students should be prepared to defend their stand on each protection issue.
  - It is more the employer's responsibility (rather than the employee's) to know the child labor laws in one's state.
  - An employer who hires a minor without a work permit may be equally willing to break other important laws, such as safety.
  - Skipping school to work is acceptable.
  - Child labor laws were designed to protect employers.
  - When state laws and federal laws disagree, the stricter rules apply.

#### 2. Analyze contemporary consumer problems and issues.

- **TOPIC BUY-IN** – Have students respond to the following questions:
  - Have you ever returned something to a store you were not satisfied with? What was it? What happened?
  - Have you ever written a letter of complaint? Would you?
  - What would you do if you did not receive satisfaction from the store or from a letter?
  - Define redress.
- **A DISGRUNTLED ROLE PLAY** – To stimulate discussion of actions individuals can take when dealing with dissatisfaction of products, conduct the following role play. You have bought a pair of jeans. After arriving home you realize one leg is three inches longer than the other. Role play the following three actions.
  - You are upset and take action.
  - You are upset and take no action.
  - You are not upset.
- **DOOR-TO-DOOR SALES** - Conduct a role-playing session to dramatize returning unsatisfactory merchandise. Jill bought a \$300.00 exercise machine from a door-to-door salesman who engaged in bait-and-switch tactics. What local, state, or federal laws and regulations are in effect to protect consumers in a similar situation to the one given?

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### C. HOUSING AND INTERIORS AND FURNISHING (Creating Environments)

#### 1. Explain ways to conserve resources and use energy wisely.

- **HOW MUCH ENERGY DOES IT TAKE TO MAKE A BREAKFAST FOOD?**  
Divide the class into groups of four to six students. Allow five minutes for each group to plan a favorite breakfast. Have students select one item on the menu, such as, orange juice. Brainstorm a list of the types of energy used from planting the seed to drinking the juice. Think of every detail, such as, irrigating the fields, transporting oranges to the juice making plant, and cooling the freezer in the grocery store. When the list is written, provide long pieces of butcher paper to draw a mural of the energy use from start to finish. All students should participate in drawing the mural. Provide paints, crayons, and/or colored pencils. Title each mural and display them in the classroom. Have students report their findings to classmates. How much more energy would be used if the glass of orange juice was poured down the sink?
- **DESIGN A PRODUCT** – Design a new product that would aid in energy conservation in the home. Draw a sketch of the invention. Name the product. What is the function of the product? How does the product aid in conserving energy? Award prizes for the most useful invention.
- **I SPY** – Sketch one's house plan. List as many energy saving suggestions as you can think of for every room of the house. Include the living room, kitchen, bedrooms, bathrooms, dining room, laundry room, garage, and workroom, if applicable. Even if energy saving tips are of a general nature, include them only once. Provide a reward for the student with the most energy saving tips.

#### 2. Describe ways to reduce waste by precycling and recycling.

- **PUZZLED BY TRASH?** Collect a number of recyclable products, such as notebook paper, computer paper, an aluminum cooking pan, aluminum lawn furniture, a piece of brass piping, soft plastic bags, plastic food containers, a small tire, and a bag of leaves. Ask students to determine what these items have in common. To generate fun, pull these items out of a large box or trash can. When someone thinks they have solved the puzzle, they should say so. The common element is that all the items can be recycled. Define recycling and introduce the idea of precycling.
- **USE YOUR IMAGINATION** - Bring an assortment of items that are commonly discarded, such as berry baskets, empty spools of thread, ice cream containers, coffee cans, egg cartons, and Cool Whip containers. Divide the students into pairs. Have each pair of student take one of the items and brainstorm things that could be done with the discarded items. If time permits, allow students to actually make the item they imagined.
- **NATURAL GROOMING** – Complete an Internet search to explore natural ingredients which are used to replace expensive, resource-stripping grooming aids.

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### D. EARLY CHILDHOOD (Challenging Children)

#### 1. Identify typical characteristics, needs and activities of young children (infant, toddler and preschooler).

- **WASH AND DRY** – Have students demonstrate how to bathe and diaper an infant.
- **APPROPRIATE PLAY ACTIVITIES** – Have students list appropriate play activities for infants and state what the child is learning by the activity. Locate coloring books with pictures of infants and children involved in many different play activities. Make the coloring book pictures into overhead transparencies to stimulate thinking about this topic.
- **HEALTH ON THE NET** – Provide pairs of students with common babysitting emergencies, such as eye injuries, heat illness, and nosebleeds. Students should study what to do in the given emergencies on an Internet site, such as, KidsHealth or KeepKids Healthy. Have students report findings to class.  
[http://KidsHealth.org/parent/firstaid\\_safe](http://KidsHealth.org/parent/firstaid_safe)  
[www.KeepKidsHealthy.com/welcom/firstaid.html](http://www.KeepKidsHealthy.com/welcom/firstaid.html)
- **PLAN A PARTY** – Have students plan a party for a preschooler. Divide students into small group with each group assuming responsibility for a part of the party: games and activities, food and decorations, finger plays and music, and presents and prizes. Invite the students from a local child development center to attend the party.

#### 2. Determine positive approaches in discipline to assist young children in accepting responsibility for personal behavior.

- **LEARNING BY EXPERIENCE** - Describe situations where children have misbehaved. What type of discipline was used? How did the child react? What do you think are the resultant effects on the child's growth? How could this typical misbehavior be redirected to positive behaviors?
- **ROLE PLAY POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE GUIDANCE** – Role play typical situations of inappropriate child behavior and suggest methods which could be used to cope with the behaviors. Contrast positive and negative discipline. Role play situations, such as: 1. Two year old Timmy picks up breakable items from the coffee table. 2. Four year old Tony and five year old Marie quarrel over the use of a toy.
- **GOAL OF DISCIPLINE DISCUSSION** – Have students exchange ideas on what the goal of discipline should be.
- **INCONSISTENCY IN DISCIPLINE** – Recall situations where parents have been inconsistent in dealing with children. What resulted from these situations? How did the child react to the discipline? Suggest ways that these situations might have been avoided or handled differently.

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### E. TEXTILES AND APPAREL (Winning Images)

#### 1. Explain how to recycle clothing.

- **CREATE GOODWILL** – After student have demonstrated that they can satisfactorily make sewing repairs; ask Goodwill industries, Salvation Army, or some other public service organization to make donations of garments that need repair. Have students repair the garments to make them wearable. Return them to the organization.
- **SHARPEN OBSERVATION SKILLS** – Hold up new and worn garments and have students point out what repairs or reinforcements are needed. Ask students to explain how those repairs or reinforcements should be made.

#### 2. Identify techniques for washing, drying, and ironing clothing made from various types of fabrics.

- **WHAT CAUSES SPOTS AND STAINS?** – Brainstorm a list of common materials that cause stains, such as mud, catsup, cosmetics, carbonated drinks, and milk. Show stained garments or fabric swatches. Ask students to determine the cause of each stain. Identify the fabrics as washable or dry-cleanable. Discuss why it is necessary to know the source of the stain and whether the fabric is washable.
- **EXAMINE CLOTHES CAREFULLY** - Set up stations around the classroom with various garments some with labels and hang tags attached and some without. Assign students to work in pairs or small groups to analyze garments and predict the care they should have.
- **WATER TEMPERATURES** – Guide a discussion on how to select water temperature for different wash loads. When should hot ater be used? What kind of clothes must be washed in cold water? When can warm water be used to wash clothes?

#### 3. Demonstrate ways to repair clothing.

- **ANOTHER GARMENT TO WEAR** – Ask each student to bring one garment from home that needs repair. Each student will repair the item in class. Combining all clothing, students will sort, wash, remove stains and spots, select cleaning products, was, dry, and press garments.
- **DECISIONS! DECISIONS! DECISIONS!** Work in pairs or small groups to analyze garments needing repair. Have each pair or group of students complete these steps in the analysis of the garment:
  - Decide whether the garment can be repaired or made more durable.
  - Determine repairs or reinforcements that are needed.
  - Explain how to make the repairs and reinforcements.Report to classmates. Have student repair garments.

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### F. NUTRITION AND WELLNESS (Kitchen Connection)

#### 1. Demonstrate safety and sanitation procedures while working in the kitchen.

- **STRESS SAFETY** – Discuss and demonstrate safe use of large and small kitchen equipment and proper use of knives.
- **CREATE A KITCHEN CULPRIT** – Design a “Kitchen Culprit” while creating safety posters for the classroom. Make a rough draft of one’s poster depicting a kitchen culprit for an assigned safety rule. Students could select small slips of paper out of a bowl with safety rules written on them. Provide poster board or butcher paper.
- **STATE HEALTH DEPARTMENT** - Invite a professional from the State Health Department to run bacteria tests for the purpose of illustrating what happens when unsanitary practices are followed. Place handled coins and strands of hair in agar. Also couch into agar and obtain a sampling from dirty hands. The State Health Department will grow the bacteria and bring the samples back to class. Discuss food safety requirements restaurant owners and food handlers follow.

#### 2. Describe methods used to plan a healthy diet based on resources, budget, time and skills.

- **SNACKS FOR HEALTH** – Plan food choices for a day based on three meals. Using the same foods, change the plan so there will be three snacks – morning, afternoon, and evening. This activity will help students understand how they can have snacks without increasing the amount of food and calories they should eat daily.
- **COMPUTERIZED DIET ANALYSIS** - Access Internet websites to analyze diets for nutrient and calorie content. Refer to “Resources” below. Following the input of data, discuss healthful foods commonly eaten by teens and discuss why the remaining foods are not healthful.
  - **Food, Recipes, and diet Analysis – The Diet Channel**  
[www.thedietchannel.com/Diet-Analysis.htm](http://www.thedietchannel.com/Diet-Analysis.htm)
  - **Nutrition Analysis Tools and System**  
[www.nat.uiuc.edu](http://www.nat.uiuc.edu)
  - **USDA The Healthy Eating Index 199-2000.**  
[www.usda.gov/cnpp/healthyeating.html](http://www.usda.gov/cnpp/healthyeating.html)

#### 3. Prepare foods by following directions.

- **YUMMY FOODS** – Have students write directions for making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches or scrambled eggs. Take a sampling of the directions and demonstrate what is written. Do not assume any step. Do exactly as is written. This will probably turn into a humorous demonstration. Stress the importance of following directions to make a quality product.
- **AMELIA BEDELIA** – Students may remember children’s stories about this delightful character that never did what she was supposed to because she did not understand directions very literally. She always did exactly as she was told, never asking questions to clarify directions even when they made no sense. Understanding cooking terms and following directions is essential for creating quality food products (and avoiding chaos created by Amelia Bedelia not understanding the instructions given!)

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### G. CAREERS (Career Exploration)

#### 1. Identify skills necessary for locating and maintaining employment.

- **WHAT MAKES A GOOD EMPLOYEE?** - Brainstorm a list of personal qualities and behaviors of a good employee. How do employers relate appearance and first impressions to personal qualities, behavior patterns and work habits?
- **DISCUSS THE IMPORTANCE** - Discuss the relationship between in-school performance and on-the-job success.
- **SELF ADVERTISEMENT** – Write an ad stating personal qualifications for employment.
- **GETTING A JOB/KEEPING A JOB** - Discuss positive and negative characteristics of employees. Which characteristics will assist an individual to succeed on the job? Why do people fail to get hired for jobs? Northwestern University conducted a survey to determine the reasons why jobs were not offered to applicants. The top ten reasons for not hiring applicants are:
  - Poor appearance.
  - “Know-it-all” attitude.
  - Poor verbal skills. Inability to express self clearly (poor voice, diction, and grammar).
  - Lack of job/career goals or purpose.
  - Lack of confidence and poise.
  - Lack of interest and enthusiasm.
  - Failure to participate in activities.
  - Too much emphasis on money (pay).
  - “Just got by” scholastically in school.
  - Not willing to start at the bottom. Wants too much too soon.

Activities taken from Personal Skills Curriculum Guides developed by Beth Zitko-Peters.

#### Curriculum Guides Available for Personal Skills 1 and 2:

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